

## Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-10

OMB-01 EB-07 AID-05 /079 W  
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R 182055Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4285

INFO AMEMBASSY CARACAS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTO DOMINGO 3206

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, DR

SUBJECT: DOMINICAN POLITICAL ASSESSMENT: SECOND QUARTER 1975

1. SUMMARY. PRESIDENT BALAGUER'S POSITION AS THE DOMINATING MOTIVE FORCE IN DOMINICAN POLITICS WAS AGAIN EMPHASIZED DURING THE QUARTER, AS HE (A) QUICKLY REPLACED THE ARMED FORCES LEADERS WHO UNEXPECTEDLY SUBMITTED THEIR RESIGNATIONS IN MAY AND THUS REESTABLISHED BALANCE BETWEEN THE TWO PERSONALISTIC CLIQUES IN THE ARMED FORCES; (B) CO-OPTED PARTIDO REVOLUCIONARIO SOCIAL CRISTIANO (PRSC) LEADERS INTO THE GOVERNMENT AND AUTHORIZED WIDESPREAD ARRESTS OF EXTREME LEFTISTS; AND (C) SHUFFLED TWO HIGHLY VISIBLE GOVERNMENT-LINING POLITICIANS WITH ASPIRATIONS TO THE PRESIDENCY, THUS REDUCING THEIR POWER AND INFLUENCE AND FURTHER CONFUSING SPECULATION AS TO WHO MIGHT SUCCEED HIM. INTERNATIONALLY, THE PRESIDENT REAFFIRMED HIS TIES TO THE UNITED STATES AND CRITICIZED VENEZUELA AT THE MAY 19 ANNUAL MEETING OF INTERAMERICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK GOVERNORS IN SANTO DOMINGO. END SUMMARY.

2. RESTORING GREATER BALANCE AMONG HIGH RANKING MILITARY PERSONALITIES

PRESIDENT BALAGUER'S MAY 7 APPOINTMENT OF MAJOR GENERAL NEIT  
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NIVAR SEIJAS AS CHIEF OF POLICE ENDED THE APPARENT PREDOMINANCE

WHICH NIVAR'S ARCHRIVAL MAJOR GENERAL ENRIQUE PEREZ Y PEREZ AND HIS ALLIES HAD APPARENTLY ACHIEVED IN THE SECURITY FORCES. WHEN THE PEREZ Y PEREZ GROUP REACTED BY JOINTLY RESIGNING, THE PRESIDENT MOVED REAPIDLY AND DEFTLY TO STRENGTHEN HIS HAND VIS-A-VIS THE MILITARY BY QUICKLY FILLING THE FOUR VACANCIES WITH MEN KNOWN FOR THEIR PERSONAL LOYALTY TO HIM AND THEIR RELATIVE NEUTRALITY IN THE NIVAR-PEREZ Y PEREZ RIVALRY. BALAGUER NEXT REAPPOINTED TWO OF THE RESIGNED OFFICERS TO CABINET POSITIONS, THUS BALANCING OFF HIS APPOINTMENT OF NIVAR WHILE THE TWO OTHER RESIGNED OFFICERS REMAINED IN LIMBO.

### 3. BALAGUERISTA POLITICIANS SHUFFLED

THE PRESIDENT ALSO JUGGLED POLITICIANS. HE REMOVED TWO PROMINENT BALAGUERISTA LIEUTENANTS WITH FUTURE PRESIDENTIAL ASPIRATIONS FROM THEIR HIGH LEVEL POSITIONS AND GAVE THEM SOMEWHAT LESS SIGNIFICANT JOBS. EX-FOREIGN SECRETARY GOMEZ BERGES WAS SENT TO A SELDOM FREQUENTED OFFICE IN THE PALACE AS SECRETARY WITHOUT PORTFOLIO AND ALVAREZ BOGAERT WAS REMOVED WITHOUT EXPLANATION FROM THE VERY POWERFUL (BECAUSE OF THE JOBS, LAND AND MONEY IT CONTROLS) DIRECTORSHIP OF THE STATE SUGAR COUNCIL AND APPOINTED AS SECRETARY OF FINANCE. THE PRESIDENT THUS REEMPHASIZED HIS STATURE AS THE DECISIVE POLITICAL FIGURE IN THE COUNTRY AND FURTHER CONFUSED THE QUESTION OF WHOM HE MIGHT SELECT AS HIS SUCCESSOR.

### 4. OUTMANEUVERING THE OPPOSITION

THE GOVERNMENT ZEROED IN ON TWO OPPOSITION PARTIES BY LARGELY CO-OPTING THE PRSC INTO THE REGIME AND REPRESSING THE EXTREMSIT MOVIMIENTO POPULAR DOMINICANO (MPD). SOCIAL CHRISTIAN REPRESENTATION IN THE GOVERNMENT (SD 0024) WAS SIGNIFICANTLY INCREASED WHEN IN APRIL THE PRESIDENT APPOINTED TWO PRSC NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS TO CABINET LEVEL POSITIONS. THESE MOVES EFFECTIVELY PUT AN END TO SOCIAL CHRISTIAN CRITICISM OF THE ADMINISTRATION. THE MPD, ON THE OTHER HAND, SAW ITS LEADERS ARRESTED, BOTH OF ITS MODERATE AND VIOLENT FACTIONS AND OF THE MPD-CONTROLLED LABOR GROUP, WHILE SYSTEMATIC GOVERNMENT REPRESSION FORCED THE PARTY UNDERGROUND, APPARENTLY IN CONNECTION WITH THE REPORTED JUNE 1 CLANDESTINE LANDING OF THREE CONFIDENTIAL

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DOMINICAN TERRORISTS (SD 2529). (THE TERRORISTS WERE ALLEGEDLY BROUGHT TO THE DR BY THREE PUERTO RICANS WHO ARE NOW BEING HELD BY THE POLICE ON CHARGES OF ATTEMPTING TO OVERTHROW THE GOVERNMENT.) THE PRESIDENT HAS THUS AGAIN BEEN ABLE TO ENTICE TALENTED MEMBERS OF THE OPPOSITION, IN THIS CASE FROM THE PRSC, INTO HIS ADMINISTRATION WHILE USING OUTSIDE EVENTS, I.E., THE ALLEGED THREE-MAN GUERRILLA LANDING, TO JUSTIFY MOVES AGAINST THE EXTREME LEFT.

5. INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

PRESIDENT BALAGUER'S MAY 19 SPEECH TO THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE GOVERNORS OF THE INTERAMERICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK REFLECTED HIS OPPOSITION TO VENEZUELA'S OIL POLICY AND HIS CLOSE TIES TO THE UNITED STATES (SD 2280). A POTENTIALLY TROUBLESOME ISSUE IN DOMINICAN-US RELATIONS AROSE WHEN DOMINICAN AUTHORITIES ARRESTED THREE PUERTO RICANS (SEE PARA 4 ABOVE) AND HELD THEM INCOMMUNICADO FOR ABOUT 2 WEEKS BEFORE PERMITTING CONSULAR ACCESS TO THEM. HOWEVER, THE GODR HAS SINCE RESPONDED POSITIVELY TO HIGH-LEVEL EMBASSY REPRESENTATIONS ON THE MATTER AND IS MORE ATTENTIVE TO THE CIVIL RIGHTS OF THE PRISONERS.

6. CONCLUSION

WHILE STRENGTHENING HIS POSITION THROUGH POLITICAL MOVES, AS INDICATED ABOVE, THE PRESIDENT, FACED WITH SERIOUS PROBLEMS IN THE ECONOMIC SECTOR -- THE DROUGHT AND THE FALLING WORLD PRICE FOR SUGAR HAVE CAUSED FOOD SHORTAGES AND WORSENERD FOREIGN EXCHANGE PROSPECTS -- HAS IMPOSED RESTRAINTS ON AN OTHERWISE BURGEONING ECONOMY.  
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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** POLITICAL SUMMARIES, POLITICAL SITUATION  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 18 JUL 1975  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** GolinoFR  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1975SANTO03206  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
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**Image Path:**  
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**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ACTION ARA  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
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**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** GolinoFR  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 09 SEP 2003  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <09 SEP 2003 by KelleyW0>; APPROVED <12 NOV 2003 by GolinoFR>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
06 JUL 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** DOMINICAN POLITICAL ASSESSMENT: SECOND QUARTER 1975  
**TAGS:** PINT, PFOR, DR, (BALAGUER, JOAQUIN)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006